

# Under a Yellow Sky

by WhenasInSilks

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Summary: Gin n' Tonic. When Harry Potter walked into the Forbidden Forest on the night of the Battle of Hogwarts, there were two souls in his body. When he re-emerged, there was just one. No one thought to ask which one. Canon compliant until Battle of Hogwarts. Starring: Hero!Ginny. Ginny Weasley is nobody's victim.

## Under a Yellow Sky

### Chapter 1

It was dark under the earth. Dark, and cold, and in the first moment of her arrival, the feeling that flared to life in her chest was not the familiar fire of her Gryffindor courage, but something rather like panic.

A moment only, and then she heard the pop of apparition (the sound strangely distorted by the charmed bubble of air surrounding her head), followed by Luna's murmured incantation, and the shower of witchlights that scattered across the stone ceiling put paid both to the darkness and that sudden, animal terror.

Ginny smiled at Luna, and, with a touch of wariness, at her companion, and held up a finger: Wait. Fumbling in her pocket, she produced a muggle matchbook. A conjured flame could sustain itself on the magic of the caster, but nonmagical fire required oxygen. It had been Severus who had performed this test on their last visit, and at the time, his seeming over-caution had irritated her. Now, she found herself grateful to him for establishing a protocol. Protocol, Luna had once remarked in one of her sporadic and unsettling flashes of insight, was a ritual like any other. Performed correctly, it summoned the illusion of control.

She struck the match. It flared in the darkness. Ginny counted the beats "one, two, three" then dropped the stick and ground it

underfoot. A flick of her wrist released her wand from its holster. "You can drop your bubbles," she told the others, dispelling her own with a wave of her wand. "Air freshening charm still works."

So that was two immediate priorities—"light and air"—taken care of, but it was still bloody cold. She considered asking Luna or Blaise to cast a warming spell—the three of them had decided beforehand that she should perform no non-essential magic in order to keep her reserves as high as possible. Luna, bless her, didn't appear to have noticed the cold, and was peering interestedly around the chamber for all the world as if she hadn't spent two bloody years of her life designing and constructing it. And Blaise was probably used to freezing underground chambers, having lived seven years of his life in the Slytherin dormitory, and Ginny was unsure enough of him not to want show any weakness.

(What would Harry do? whispered a little voice at the back of her head.)

—which was silly, because she was the leader and leaders took action. "Bit nippy down here, isn't it?" she said briskly. "Blaise, d'you mind?"

He complied with a lazy wave of his wand, his face its usual politely unreadable mask. A wave of warmth spread throughout the room.

"Oooh, good thinking!" said Luna. "Heat helps scare off frigidicrous glibbons."

"Yeah," Ginny said. "My thoughts exactly." She clapped her hands together (and grimaced inwardly—that was one of her mother's mannerisms). "So, we all clear on the plan then?" What she meant was, Is there anything we haven't thought of? Have we left any possible loopholes? What she meant was, Isn't there any other way?

"Oh, I should say so," said Luna, who was engaged in coaxing one of the little balls of witchlight down from the ceiling.

Blaise simply inclined his head, a single raised brow indicative of polite incredulity.

She smiled wryly and slouched against the wall, running a hand through her hair. "Humour me."

"We wait one hour exactly," Luna recited. "Then we put up our shields. Another half hour, and we evacuate." She said the last word slowly, savouring each syllable. One of the witchlights was circling her brow, and another came to rest an inch or so above her outspread hand. Dreamily, she began to turn in place, hand still outstretched, the lights matching pace.

"And when you reach the surface?" Ginny pushed.

Blaise's shoulders lifted and he exhaled in the merest suggestion of a sigh. He had been the one to push for a contingency plan in the first place—"It's redundant," she had argued, and he had shrugged and said, "Better redundant than dead," sounding so much like Severus that it hurt—but that didn't mean the final plan had been to his liking. "We collapse the chamber and contact Granger," he said.

\_("But why \_Granger\_" he had demanded. It was the most expressive she had ever seen him.\_

"\_Can you think of anyoneâ€"anyone\_â€"in the world with more experience?" she'd replied, hotly.\_

\_He'd opened his mouth, but Luna had beat him to it. "It's you!" she'd said to Ginny, sounding pleased, as if she'd worked out the solution to a puzzle. "Just you," and then she'd turned her smile on Blaise, who had shut his mouth and leant back in his chair.\_

\_And Ginny had never formulated it that way before, not even to herself, but it was true, and she thought of how badly the world had gone wrong that it \_was\_ true. "Yeah," she'd said. "And a fat lot of good that'll do if I'm dead." And didn't say, \_Or worse.\_)\_

"We know our parts," Blaise said in the here-and-now, and gave her a half smile. "Try not to fret too much." He flicked his wand, and sank languidly into the sofa which had materialised behind him.

\_That\_ made her grin. "I'll just leave you two to sort the interior decorating then."

"We've been awfully negligent," piped up Luna, pausing in a wobbly arabesque, globes of pale fire orbiting her outstretched fingers and toes. "It's a blessing we haven't already been infested with burrowing tundrils, but we really haven't a moment to lose. I'm sure Blaise won't mind helping with the ritual purification."

The witchlights darted back up to the ceiling as she dropped to the floor and began rummaging in her satchel. After a moment, she produced a battered and somewhat elderly garland. The flowers were an eye-watering green and appeared to be buzzing faintly. Blaise's eyes widened, but he accepted the garland with unexpected gravity.

Ginny opened her mouth, and shut it, remembering what Luna had said about protocol and rituals. Even if those rituals involved removing one's shoes and filling them withâ€"was that custard? Surely not.

"Go on, Weasley," Blaise said, almost kindly. "Do the hero thing."

Perhaps it \_was\_ custard after all (and now was \_not\_ the time to wonder how exactly Luna had violated the first Principal Exception to Gamp's Law of Elemental Transfiguration) because Luna had run a finger under her wand and was now sucking on it with a thoughtful expression. She removed the finger with a startling \_pop\_.

And strangely enough it was that \_pop\_ that jolted her into action. "Right," Ginny said, and didn't say "see you later" in case it was a lie, and didn't say "goodbye" in case she never said it again. She turned to the wall she had been resolutely ignoring, to the door that only she could see.

And just like that, all of her carefully cultivated detachment seemed to drain away. The rest of the chamber slid out of focus, Luna's dreamily didactic voice sinking beneath a gentle roaring like the sea. And waiting for her in the pit of her stomach was dread, cold

and heavy and sickening.

She squeezed her eyes shut. \_What would Harry do?\_

She remembered Harry at the Battle of Hogwarts, heading alone into the forest, and she remembered what he had met there, and yes, there was that old grief rising up to meet her, and that awful, mindless fear. But then, greater than either of those came anger, and she let it grow until it filled her, until it burned away grief and fear and left only purpose.

Ginny opened her eyes. She strode forward, opened the door, and stepped into the chamber beyond.

\* \* \*

><p>They didn't watch her go.<p>

Blaise knew enough about the Fidelius Charm to know what it would look like as she crossed the threshold into the second chamber. She'd simply seem to disappearâ€"nothing fancy, just one minute there, and the next minute gone. And she \_would\_ be gone, entirely gone, unreachable, untilâ€"ifâ€"she crossed that threshold again.

Blaise was a Slytherin and no fool, so naturally he'd thought about that \_if\_ and all its angles: if she came back, if she \_didn't\_ come back. If she came back â€| wrong. He'd made and carried through plans for everything that came before the \_if\_. He'd made plans for everything after, and then he'd thought and planned some more, meticulously mapping out each branching possibility until he was half mad with the planning. But that \_if\_, perhaps the most significant of his life, that moment of uncertainty between her crossing the threshold and whatever followedâ€"that was out of his control. He'd placed any control he might have had in the hands of a Gryffindor girl almost two years his junior (and a blood traitor to boot) and he was almost sure he had been right to do so. But that didn't mean he had to watch her as she walked away with it.

Luna, too, kept her eyes downcast, apparently absorbed by her task. She filled her left trainer and moved on to her right. Several minutes passed in silence.

"Lovegood," Blaise said.

Luna gave a little start and blinked up at him. He inclined his head towards her wandhand. Her gaze refocused on her wand, which had slipped in her grip and was now forming a glistening heap against one of the legs of the sofa. A whispered \_finite\_ stopped the flow, and another wave of her wand banished the heap.

Another minute passed. And another.

"I don't suppose you \_were\_ violating the first Principal Exception to Gamp's Law of Elementary Transfiguration?" Blaise said, his tone one of casual enquiry.

She shook her head. "I was summoning it," she explained. "From my larder."

Blaise looked at the mass filling her shoesâ€"and half as much again

had spilled onto the couchâ€”at a rough estimate, she had produced at least a litre and a half of custard. He raised his eyebrows. "You came prepared."

"No, not really." Luna tilted her head back towards the ceiling, overlarge earrings bobbing. "I just like custard."

And what, thought Blaise, could one possibly say to that.

A pause.

"She'll be alright," she told the ceiling, and Blaise didn't know if she was asking for reassurance, or giving it.

He thought of lying. Insteadâ€”

"She might not be," he said. And found, to his irritation, that he was half hoping that she would argue.

"No, she mightn't," Luna agreed. She tilted her head down again and fixed those too-large, too-protuberant eyes on him. "But we planned for days. We thought of every possibility, laid down every course of action." She took a breath. "And she's the bravest of us and the most powerful and she has the most fighting experience and she knows him, all the hims, every him, and she survived, and then she took him down. And we did do an awfully good job building this prison." And then, much more softly. "And she has to pull it off. So."

And if she doesn't? He bit back the question on his tongue. He knew the answer.

"So what comes next?" he said instead. "With theâ€”" he made a gesture encompassing his vibrating crown and Luna's pudding filled trainers.

"Oh." Her brow furrowed. "Do you know, I'm not sure? I was mostly just making it up."

"You wereâ€”" he stopped, at a loss for words.

She gave him a look, half stern, half pitying. "You never get burrowing tundrils this far north."

He held her gaze for a moment. Then he sank his head into his hands and laughed until he was near sobbing with it. As his last chokes of laughter died, she pulled out a handkerchief and handed it to him, silently, without looking at him. He wiped the tears from his eyes and hands, and looked down at the square of cloth. It was tartan, in what might have been Ravenclaw colours, although he had never before seen Ravenclaw associated with such a lurid shade of blue.

Silently, he cleaned up the evidence of his lapse, folded the handkerchief, and handed it back down to her. She took it, again without looking.

In a carefully offhand voice, he asked, "Are you comfortable down there?"

"Quite comfortable, thank you, Blaise." But after a moment, she scooted backwards until she was leaning against the base of the

couch. She began to hum quietly to herself, her posture relaxed, head tilted slightly to one side. Her wand never left her hand.

They waited.

\* \* \*

><p>AN: Fear not, my ducklings! All questions shall be answered in time (some sooner than others). But feel free to ask them anyway!

I haven't written fanfic since I was 13 which was a \_goodly\_ while ago, so please forgive any overwriting, inconsistencies in character or tone, etc. I barely know what I'm doing. This is gonna be a BIG story (in terms of stakes, and probably also in terms of length) because I can't see G&T coming together except in extremis. At least, not without it being super horrifying and abusive. We're aiming for only moderately horrifying here, folks.

In terms of updates, I've chapter 2 mostly written and am piecing together chapter 3. I'm mostly writing for my own (capricious) entertainment at the moment, but if there's actually any interest in the story, that'd definitely be motivation to keep going with it. Like, I'm posting this chapter when I probably should be spending more time editing it just to see if it's worth continuing. So like, if you want to read more, you have the power to make that happen! All you have to do is review!

This is T for now, but I definitely expect to upgrade it to M. For language at the very least, and probably for more exciting things after. So fair warning.

End  
file.